

# THE PLAIN DEALER

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## Gov. John Kasich opens Ohio State Fair with family day out; giant butter sculpture unveiled

By [Robert Higgs, Plain Dealer Columbus Bureau Chief](#)

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Opening the [Ohio State Fair](#) isn't just a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Gov. John Kasich. It's also a day out with his wife and daughters.

There's food to be sampled and displays to be marveled at and prize winners to congratulate.

And there are family bragging rights to be defended — on the Giant Slide.

Kasich opened the fair this morning, with help from the Ohio State Fair Youth Choir, the All-Ohio State Fair Band and a host of fair dignitaries.

Last year's attendance of more than 840,000 was the most since 2004. But if today's pleasant weather continues, this year's fair, the 160th, could top 900,000, said General Manager Virgil Strickler. The fair runs through Aug. 4.

The governor touted the fair as good family event. And as was the case last year, he was joined for the day by his wife, Karen, and daughters, Emma and Reese.

But if you're the governor, it's not so easy to have a family day out, particularly in a park filled with thousands of people.

There are the well-wishers, like Carol Trimmer and her son Justin from nearby Dublin, who stopped the governor to thank him for his efforts to get insurance coverage expanded for autism.

There are contest winners, such as the top finishers in the "Ag is Cool Creative Expression Competition." Kasich took time to chat with each of a half dozen winners and their parents, including 10-year-old Matthew John Harris of Powell, who was awarded best in show for his video that focused on his grandfather, a farmer.

David T. Daniels, director of the Department of Agriculture, used the event to note agriculture's importance to Ohio, generating about \$105 billion annually for the state's economy. One in every seven jobs in the state is related to agriculture.

And there are people who wanted to talk to the governor about jobs — in places like the Ohio Conference of Plasterers and Cement Masons tent, where apprentices were showing off their skills.

**Article continued here:**

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